

The Discovery of the Child

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IT is a significant fact that today, with birth control the engrossing subject of the moment, the importance of the child as a national asset is being discussed on all sides. In an article on "The Discovery of the Child" in a recent issue of *Everyman* a writer says:

"What difference do all these things make to me?" So asks many a jaded man and woman on being told what are the great scientific contributions of the modern age. Relativity and atomic physics; the new appreciation of the sidereal universe; the exciting clues of psychology; these and other discoveries are admittedly formidable. But they are abstruse, and appear to have nothing to do with life as the ordinary man lives it. Even medical science, with all its dramatic research, is only saving life, not making it richer.

But the contribution which, it seems to me, will outrank all others of this generation, is the discovery, not of outer-stellar space, not of the electron, not of any filter-passing virus, but of the nature of the child. And of this no one can ask, "What difference does it make to me?" It makes a difference to the whole outlook for mankind."

Reading this, one is tempted to believe that this discovery of the importance of the nature of the child is a very new thing—instead of a very old one! But the important fact which the writer wishes to emphasize is that the child is so valuable to the State that he must be taken care of by the State from his earliest days—the mother being looked upon by him (as by many modern writers) as a quite negligible quantity!

He then goes on to describe the important part nursery schools will play in the future development of the child, and as a means of providing the right environment for his growth as a "healthy, coordinated adult," and a valuable asset in the nation's stock-in-trade.

Now, this point of view is interesting because it is typical of the outlook of the modern politician and social worker with regard to the child. To him the child is valuable because he is an *asset* as "a member of a social world."

And it is realized, he says, nowadays that he does not become valuable only at "voting age" but by the "gradual process of adjusting himself to his comrades on his early playgrounds." Hence the necessity for the nursery-school system which ensures this right, free action and social training of the very young child from the very beginning.

So important, by the way, has this idea become that the nursery school was part of the program of all three political parties in England in the last election. So that before very long babies will, as a general rule, leave home almost as soon as they can talk and will become part of the new scheme for the development of "national assets," which the nursery school, as a Government educational institution, represents.

The establishment, in fact, of the nursery school as part of an educational system of England will strike the first blow at parenthood and the undermining of the home as the center of the child's universe.

The average Englishman today has gone mad on social reform. And in his desire to make a perfect State he is demolishing the very foundations of that perfect State—the parent and the home.

The nursery-school system founded by two wonderful women, Rachel and Margaret McMillan, was a pioneer effort of a quarter of a century ago to save the slum child, who was underfed and devitalized mentally and physically, from parents who were unfit to care for it, and from homes where no real nurture was possible. When in 1904 the nursery-school system was explained by Margaret McMillan in her first work, the idea that it would eventually be adopted as a Government educational measure to take from the hands of mothers of all classes the care of their very young children, never entered the mind of the writer. Homes were *homes* in those days, and the "emancipated" woman was not abusing her privileges of education and greater freedom by indulgence in wild orgies of pleasure, neglecting her home, and refusing to have children—as she is today.

But the establishment of the nursery school all over England and of Government training centers for nursery-school teachers stands today as a terrible indictment of the modern mother!

For the environment of the nursery school is nothing more or less than that of the ordinary normal happy home.

But it is essentially not that of the one- or two-child home which is "fashionable" and "popular" today.

The first essential of the right training and education of the very young child is companionship. And this vital part of its normal development and character training is taken from it today by a social system which regards family limitation as an inevitable part of happy, satisfactory living.

The old-fashioned home with a large family group of boys and girls was a nursery school in itself. Not a single one of all the requisites for the carrying out of the McMillan system are lacking in a home of this kind. There is no elaborate paraphernalia or equipment necessary. The value of the McMillan Nursery School lies in the fact that the child is educated by its peers and by the ordinary educative experiences of daily life.

It gets from contact with children of its own age, from the rough and tumble of games, from the stimulus to intellect and imagination, of concerted action in simple domestic tasks, and lessons of observation and play (for no lessons as the school child knows them are included in the system), the character training and mental and moral development it would get in a home from brothers and sisters under ordinary home conditions, and under the watchful eye of a wise and intelligent mother. And it gets in a home what no school can ever provide, the love and sympathy of the mother who is qualified by the Creator Himself to be the child's best teacher, and who gets, together with the gift of her child, from Him, those peculiar qualities of intuition and sympathy and love which she will need to educate and train him not only to be a citizen of earth, but, far more important, a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Maternal love is the first agent in education. But on the *quality* of this love depends the child's whole future. It must be a *thinking love*. And it must be a *selfless love*. It is the wrong kind of maternal love which starts a child in life with the greatest of all handicaps, the lack of companionship—of the brothers and sisters and the joyous educative atmosphere they provide, which is, or should be, the birthright of every child.

And it is this birthright, alas, which modern science is conspiring to deprive it of and which can never be adequately supplied, no matter what scientific educationalists may say, any other way.

The nursery school is at best only a poor substitute for a home. And it is significant of a generation of women educated in the use of contraceptives that they should have to look to the State to do what the Creator meant to be the supreme duty of woman's life—the early training and education of their children.

"The training of children," says Herbert Spencer in "Education," "physical, moral and intellectual is dreadfully defective. And in a great measure it is so because parents are devoid of that knowledge by which this training can alone be rightly guided."

Women are waking up to their duties in many directions, and as mothers become more highly educated they will doubtless take up as a profession the mental and physical training of their children according to the most approved and scientific authorities. But no amount of specializing or training in the technicalities of child education (valuable as these may be) will make up for the formative influence of a child's character the companionship in a large home affords.

The large family is looked upon almost as a tragedy to-day. The high cost of living is the excuse most often given for the one- or two-child family. But the wealthier the parents, the more they shirk parenthood. And the real root of the trouble lies in the growing need for "luxury-living," the high cost of pleasure, and the modern urge for self-expression and self-gratification at all costs.

The "emancipated" woman, with her new-found liberty, resents the ties of children and home. Her new freedom is so sweet, so all-sufficing, that she pities and secretly despises the woman who is cemented to her home by a crowd of little ones. But what is she gaining for herself by her new liberty, and how is her "enlightenment" and her "emancipation" helping towards her happiness and the betterment of humanity? The childless, or the one-child woman, in spite of her pleasures and her many avenues of usefulness, has no real *roots*. She is restless, dissatisfied with her life of pleasure and self-gratification. She is over-anxious, over-solicitous about her poor only child who suffers all his life in consequence. She is forever bored to death with her friends, her husband—and herself. She flies around trying one new thing after the other—amusements, dress, flirtations, extravagances of all kinds. But all these begin to pall

after a time. For it is children who keep life from going stagnant, who keep it alive and sweet. They may mean anxieties and worries and cares and deprivations. But they make life real. They give married life its meaning. They help to keep the institution of marriage sound and enduring. You can't worry about fancied slights and infidelities in a husband when you've a large crowd of children to care for. And a husband is much less likely to find his distraction and interests outside his home when he has a tribe of jolly youngsters scrambling over him, waiting to be played with or helped with home lessons, than when he comes home to a silent, empty home! You can't stagnate where children are. You can't concentrate on *self*. They stir up the depths of life in you and keep it wholesome and sweet and *good*. The worries children provide, the anxieties they create, are clean and universal. You know all the time, if you keep going, good will come out of it all. And good does come—in large measure pressed down and running over. Everything else may fail a woman—husband, friends, money—all the things that seem to make life's greatest good. But with her children round her, with the touch of their lips and hands upon her own, strength and contentment are born in her, as they are no other way.

And yet for the sake of a good time—a few years of added youth, for dancing and cocktails and lipsticks, the admiration of someone else's husband, a high-powered motor car,—children, and all they mean in life, are sacrificed by thousands of women all the world over.

And when the heyday of a woman's youth is fled, when life's shadows gather round, she sits alone, amidst the ruins of her barren womanhood, with empty hands and with God's supreme purpose for her life unfulfilled.

Youth is the thing women seem to crave for most today. To keep young at any cost is their aim. And no expenditure of time or money is too great to keep old age at bay. Yet the youth thus purchased is a base, spurious thing. It is children who provide the blaze in life before which we who are growing old may warm ourselves and bring back into our lives a semblance of the youth we have lost. We help our children. That is our duty, our purpose as parents. But they help us more—ininitely more. They are so near the Kingdom of Heaven that they lift us with their tiny hands to their own high eminence.

We hear so often of the value of the mother to the child. I have often wished someone would stress the value of the child to the mother.

We cannot do without our children. They form the ladder by which we who have borne them may reach to Heaven. And yet we choose intellectual and social pleasures, the things which money can buy, before the simple, God-given happiness which children bring! And we turn them out, at the bidding of the State, to learn the first lessons of life—and by far the most important ones—from those who are far less fitted than we are to teach them.

One of the greatest advantages of a big family is that it provides the continuity of home life. Couples who marry and have one or two children find themselves alone in middle age, which has been called the danger zone of married life. Then, without the cementing bond of common interests and shared anxieties, they drift apart and end in the divorce courts.

The one- or two-child family is an artificial product of a materially-minded age which thinks money can buy everything of value. But where children are concerned the things money can buy are of very small value. It cannot buy the common experiences of joy and pain, of courage and endurance, of self-sacrifice and devotion, and of loyalty, which family life affords. The lessons the children learn from each other in a well-disciplined home are of the utmost value to them. They can be provided, with reservations, in a well-run nursery school which aims at supplying in a child's life what the mother has not been able to give it. But it is at best a *substitute*. And if mothers all the world over would realize the value to the world of their individual work in their homes, as the educators and trainers of their children, the nursery-school system would die a natural death. Women are priding themselves today on the importance of their work for humanity which their emancipation is enabling them to do. They seem to think they will accomplish much by sitting on committees and discussing infant mortality and remedying social evils by talking in public places about them. We all want to see social evils corrected, and the ills and wrongs of humanity put right. But we shall none of us do more than the simple mother does who stays at home, and brings up a large family of healthy, happy sons and daughters to be physically and

morally sound, who will be ready to take their places in the world as honest, upright men and women who will act according to the principles of the religion which it has been the mother's first duty to instil into them from their earliest years.

That is where the Catholic mother's share in the regeneration of the world will come in. She sets no limitations to her family. And she knows there are no limitations to the graces which will come to her, to help her in her great task, from Him who gave into her hands the greatest of all duties and obligations—that of motherhood.

Stiff Clay

REV. FRANCIS P. LEBUFFE, S.J.

Reprinted from Jesuit Missions

"I HAVE heard our great moulder of men, Ignatius, declare that the stiffest clay he ever had to handle was, at the outset, Francis Xavier." Such, according to his secretary, was the judgment passed by St. Ignatius Loyola on the man who was to take on his soul the enduring imprint of his Captain Christ, and then go forth, in relentless attack, to dislodge the devil from his fortresses in the East.

Xavier was "stiff clay" by nature and nurture, and by grace. The Basque country was his home, and its rough ground and thirsty soil were no training ground for weaklings. Summer scorched it; winter rock-ribbed it with cold. And far up in that Basque land was the castle or rather small fort where Don Francisco de Xavier y Jaxu was born. Family traditions were strong and woven toughly into the fibers of his soul, and not the least of these was the spirit of high daring to attempt the noblest, and, if need be, fail—but always without stain. Like mettlesome steeds, men those days sniffed the air of battle lustily; and it was up the slopes of Pampeluna where Ignatius Loyola barred their way that Xavier's two brothers charged with their companions-in-arms. They smote down the doughty Castilian captain; but his later revenge was a holy one, for he too, smote in turn and wrung surrender from the "stiffest clay" and made Francis yield to God.

Wars are costly, and the Xaviers found themselves im-

poverished—but still proud. Francis would not chance his life, poor as it was now in earthly goods, in the shifting fortunes of soldiery. He would enter the clerical state and take to books and serve God besides. Thus he went to Paris and plunged into the life of the University. Clean and straight and true himself, his companions were riotous. With them he went, but of their sins he would have nothing. Clay he was, with every chance of becoming mud, as they; but he was stiff clay, and the fetid, reeking atmosphere that exhaled from the sewers of undergraduate life did not soften or soil him. A rare example, yes, and as one reads the story of the Saint, one wonders what might have happened if the fight, unaided consciously by grace, had continued much longer.

Stiff clay he was, too, in his upholding of what he deemed necessary to the dignity of birth; and hence his frequent demands for money from home, his fine application to his self-appointed task of learning, his brilliant success as a scholar. Bred into the very marrow of his being was the high ideal that spurred Hector on, as he drew his sword on Achilles. "Nay, by my word, I shall not die ignobly and cheated of fame, but in a deed of daring that shall be told to men yet unborn." And Francis, in reality, had it within him to blazon his name across academic skies, already flashing with luminous minds.

Nineteen he was when he came to Paris; nineteen, with dreams and ambitions to unsettle a weaker mind; and the stiff clay was still stiff three years later when Ignatius, the middle-aged, halting, rather-the-worse-for-the-wear, begging scholar came from Salamanca; and still very stiff when a year later, 1529, Francis was forced to share his room with the man he had learned to dislike heartily.

There we have the scene set: stiff clay and a master-moulder, working with God as the designer. Quickly but firmly, with a thrust here and a bit of pressure there, the moulder worked. Studies were going well, and the bachelor's degree was won, yes—"But what shall it profit . . . ?" Permission was granted to lecture to the younger students, and their applause was long and loud—"But what shall it profit . . . ?" An ecclesiastical benefice was in sight and an assured livelihood with leisure for further research—"But what shall it profit . . . ?" Irk it did, this constant questioning, but deep down in its inmost depths, the clay was

stirred, and in 1533, fell, yes, literally fell, impressionable, into Ignatius' hands.

Then there was the new stiffening. The old, strong stuff was there, every bit of which could and would be used: a pride of family which would now make him one of God's own gentlemen, not a mere polite cog in society; a firmness of purpose and tenacity of will that will hold him straight on his course across Europe and the ever-widening seas, across India and Ceylon and Malacca and the Moluccas, across Japan and unto the very threshold of China; a challenging intellect, that could stoop to the level of the youngest child, and yet could outwit Brahman and Bonze and smash their cleverest arguments; a vaulting ambition that once was thrilled by the appeal of human learning but now was avid in its hunger for souls.

Stiff clay, now reset unto the image and likeness of the God-Man! Human he was still, for as he tramped the hot roads of India, or searched out souls in the veritable hells of Ternate and Tidore, or hid in the bush lest his would-be murderers find him, he wore close to his heart the signature of each of the companions who had knelt with him at the trysting of Montmartre, and he ill-concealed his unfeigned joy when letters from Ignatius came or his equal pain when none arrived. Lowly-minded he was, so that he wrote to Ignatius on his knees; yet, in Japan, he used, as only a saint could use, the rich accouterments which bespoke his Portuguese ambassadorship from Goa. "More, yet more!" had been his cry in sleep when the re-setting of his stiff clay was yet new; and now, when there was question of a single soul to be brought to Christ, that clay was like wrought iron. Could a gambler be won by taking a hand at cards? Then a hand was taken. Could the Buddhists be impressed by fasting? Then fast he would beyond the best of them. Could the timid Papuans be drawn from their jungle huts by singing? Then sing he did, loud and long. Could men faithless to their marriage vows, be snatched into holier living by dining at their houses? Then self-invited Xavier came and seasoned the food tactfully and unobtrusively with the flavor of God's word. Seasick he might be for two long months as the ship plowed its thirteen-months way from Lisbon to Goa, and the sun might turn the becalmed vessel into a furnace for forty days, and an epidemic might transform it into a floating pest-house,

and food might be alive with maggots and the drinking water heave with nasty living things, but Francis would crawl among the crew and grope his weakened way among the passengers, else some soul might go from that hell to a worse one.

Stiff clay! The one terrific thing about the Saint is his humanness, and the one terrific thing about this man is his sainthood. Why is it that we do not learn that lesson? Not one jot or tittle of his human nature left him—but he was a saint! Not one known way of serving God was left untried—but he was a man! Everything he had was kept and used for God. No man that did not have the fires of ambition leaping scorchingly in his soul could have carried the standard of Christ up steep slopes, as he. No man that did not value intellect and felt its lashing curiosity, could have ripped through the tangles of Eastern thought, as he. No man that did not have a heart that loved intensely and felt the pang of sundered lives, could have swept on, as he, rounding up souls for Christ. He might have been held in Europe and done the work of an orderly in the hospitals and maybe once again, to stab his inner rebellion, he might have sucked his fingers, filthied from touching ulcered skin. He might have been kept at writing Ignatius' letters, as his secretary, with hands numbed from wilful lack of fire. And if he did, he would have done them well, and been a saint, too. To be a saint one needs no least out-of-the-way thing in one's life. To be a saint one needs only to do each and every thing in life well; big things and little things; work, pleasure, sleep. No matter what one's occupation, high or low, it is possible for him to rise to sanctity. The very highest sanctity is in the warp and woof of our lives. This was a most vivid reality to Francis Xavier.

He knew that sanctity is nothing more and nothing less than an honest-to-goodness day's work done well and done for God, from prayers in the morning, through the hours of work and play and table-time, until another prayer closes off the hours of conscious service of God. He might have been a "humdrum" saint as John Berchmans was. But his call was to flash meteor-like across the Orient and leave high-piled wreckage of the devil's work in his path, that therefrom there might be upbuilt the house of God in living souls.

That was the work he was called to do, and he did it with all the vibrancy of his Basque temperament, re-set with the moulding power of grace. A fierce oneness of purpose was in his life but not an unbalanced one that would throw other lives out of their pre-ordained orbits. It was a purpose that made his own clay "set hard" for God, in the way God wanted it to set, and did its utmost best to have all other human clay "set hard" just in the mould that God had planned for it.

And the stiff clay that was first moulded in the high country of the Basque was "set" at last on the lonely isle of Sancian with China's longed-for shore shutting in the view and a Chinese boy for nurse. Francis had wanted to lay China too at Christ's feet, but his Captain had ordered the valiant soldier home. Thwarted, Francis made the sacrifice and the stiff clay "set" resignedly in death, and the Master's image was strikingly thereon, that, as in life, so in death, Francis might lead us on to God. "For what shall it profit . . . ?"

Our Lady's Presentation

REV. ALBERT POWER, S.J.

Reprinted from the Melbourne Advocate

THE festival of Mary's Presentation, on November 21, carries our minds back 2,000 years—to the days of the great Temple of Jerusalem. In that Temple, on a certain day some twenty years before the Christian era, a simple but impressive ceremony is taking place. A father and mother have brought their little child—a girl of three years of age—to place her under the care of pious women who lived in the precincts of the Temple, that the child might there receive her education and be prepared for her life's work.

The child was outwardly fair to behold, exquisitely beautiful and gracious, with a marvelous look of radiant innocence and joy on her countenance, and eyes that betokened wisdom and maturity beyond her years. People coming and going across the Temple courts witnessed the scene, but paid little heed, and dreamt not at all of its vast significance.

A few years later, on a cold winter's evening, travelers along the road to Bethlehem passed a weary couple—man and wife—that were toiling slowly and painfully towards the town to be enrolled in the census ordered by the Emperor Augustus. Those who gazed at the poverty-stricken pair little guessed that in their keeping was the world's supremest treasure—the God of the Universe, come as a Babe to save mankind. People knew not, dreamt not, that the darkness of that night held in its grasp the Light of God's wisdom enshrined in a human soul, God's wisdom made incarnate and visible for us to behold—in a Baby Boy.

For the young Mother—toiling slowly into Bethlehem, jostled carelessly by the hurrying crowds—is Mary the Mother of Jesus the Messiah. And the little child three years old, who was presented in the Temple a few years earlier by her parents, Joachim and Anne, is that same Holy Virgin.

Gaze upon that child's face as she stands on the Temple steps, the great gray building towering above her. Try to imagine what that face was like, the face of her whose soul was absolutely stainless, untouched by any taint of sin, original or actual.

Her soul and body are being prepared to receive God in a way in which no other ever received Him. She is being prepared to stand to God in a relationship in which no other creature, angelic or human, ever stood or ever would stand. She is being fitted to minister to Him, to cooperate with Him in that outward manifestation, revelation, bodying forth of Himself which was to surpass in excellence, mysteriousness and sublimity, all the revelations and communications which His omnipotence had hitherto brought to pass. For this child will, in a few years' time, be summoned to the high office of Mother of God: that is, she will become in the truest and fullest sense the Mother of a little Babe who will be God Incarnate; that Babe, though a human being like ourselves, with created body and a created soul like ours, will be a Divine Person.

That is our Christian Faith! And every time you enter a Catholic church, you come to make public profession of your belief in that central dogma of the Incarnation. The honor and reverence we pay to Mary Immaculate, and to her spouse, St. Joseph, are but the natural, logical out-

come of our belief in the Divinity of Jesus. It is just because we accept so wholeheartedly and unhesitatingly the doctrine of Christ's Divinity that we also so wholeheartedly and unhesitatingly show deepest reverence to Mary, His Mother, and to Joseph, His foster-father.

Marvelously, and in many different ways, has God revealed Himself to us—told us of His power, His wisdom, His majesty. And in the first place He has built for us this great material universe to be our home and our playground for a little while. He has spread all around us the shining splendor of the sunlit world, the quivering realm of light, the myriads of stars that race so swiftly, so silently, so unswervingly in their orbits. This universe is entrancingly beautiful—so beautiful that because of its fairness and its fascination, men forget the duty they owe to the Creator.

Three qualities in particular are stamped, as it were, on the material universe around us—strength, beauty, infinitude.

Strength: Think of the appalling, immeasurable forces at work in the vast arena where Sirius and Arcturus and the Pleiades and millions of other radiant suns are all at play! This earth of ours, this tiny planet which is but a speck of dust compared to the vast masses of other heavenly bodies, is racing around the sun at the rate of nineteen miles a second—faster than any cannon ball ever projected by human agency. Think of the force required merely to propel this one tiny planet of ours at that enormous pace!

Beauty: All the poets of the world—all the artists—all the nature-lovers—all the Saints, conspire to tell us about the beauty of God's world. Those people spend their lives trying to express in some outward shape their appreciation of its beauty—yet, how imperfectly they succeed!

Infinitude: What and where are the limits of the universe? No man can tell. Astronomers strive eagerly to fathom the depths of the ocean of heaven—and the results they report are staggering indeed. Light takes eight minutes to reach us from the sun, which is 90,000,000 miles away. From the nearest fixed star light takes three and a half years to travel. So when you look up at Alpha Centauri, which is the nearest star (it is one of the "pointers" of the Southern Cross), you can say "the light entering my eye tonight left that star three and a half years ago, and has

been traveling ever since at the rate of 180,000 miles a second."

That, I say, is the nearest fixed star. From other stars the light takes 100 years, 300 years, 1000 years to come. And lately astronomers have been studying a nebular object in the depths of space from which light (it is estimated) travels to us in the space of a quarter of a million of years!

Whence this strength, this beauty, this infinitude of the material world? The answer is, from God. They are evidence of the strength, the beauty, the infinite Being of Him who produced the world. The perfect mechanism of a delicate machine reflects the skill and thought of the man who devised it; the magic beauty of the great Dresden Madonna tells of the splendid artist soul of the painter Raphael; the Sistine Chapel and the marble Moses tell of the unparalleled genius of Michael Angelo. So the greatness, strength, beauty, boundless extent of the world give us a hint of those same attributes in God.

Yet what is the whole material universe compared with a single human soul? The universe exists for the sake of the soul; just as the world of light exists simply for the eye, and has no meaning apart from the eye.

And if God has revealed Himself so wonderfully by creating the material universe, far more wonderfully and perfectly has He revealed Himself by creating man.

By creating man to His own image and likeness—that is by creating a spiritual substance which would share in the Divine faculties of knowledge and free will and spiritual activity, God has revealed Himself, has externized Himself far more completely than in creating material things, inasmuch as He made in man a being capable of sharing His own Divine life.

Man, with his marvelous powers, his reasoning faculty that sweeps all creation with piercing glance, grasps at the past, the present, and the future, and even penetrates through creation in order, if possible, to fathom God Himself, the Uncreated Being that lies behind and explains it; man with his creative power of free will—of choosing, of loving; and also his faculty for imitating creation itself by shaping and moulding the material things around him to express with accuracy, sureness and beauty his internal thoughts, emotions, sensations; man, I say, is richly endowed, the lord of the visible world, the highest manifesta-

tion in nature of what God Himself is like. He is in very truth god-like in his own sphere—the center, end and explanation of material things, just as the Blessed Trinity is the center, end and explanation of man's own existence with its multitudinous activities.

And yet there was something better still, something higher, something more wonderful in the line of Divine revelation or external manifestation of God's being.

God would not merely create man, but He would Himself assume man's nature and appear amongst us as a Man. By a supreme exercise of His Almighty power, by an act which to our human way of thinking we might deem sufficient to exhaust the resources of omnipotence, God, as it were, projects Himself into a created nature; He lifts up a created soul and body to such close, intimate union with Himself that the man thereby produced will be not a human, but a Divine Person. And thus the Word of God, the mind of God, the thought of God, the light of God, was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.

Now the Catholic Church exists in order to study, to contemplate, to present to others this great Revelation of God, which is Jesus Christ. The Catholic Church is a great world wide and ever-extending organization for promoting the knowledge of the Incarnation and for keeping ever fresh in men's minds the historical fact that there once appeared on the stage of history a Man who was not a mere man, but God Himself in Person.

Now turn again and look at the baby child being presented in the Temple. She is destined to be the Mother of this God-Man—His living Temple as no other creature ever could be.

Hence Catholic reverence for Mary. Hence the Church's zeal in defending her honor and promoting devotion to her.

For the Church understands that Jesus wishes us to know and be familiar with His dear friends and companions during life—Mary, His Immaculate Mother, and Joseph, His foster-father. He introduces us into the bosom of His own family.

Surely, to a thoughtful mind, this fact that the Catholic Church, in speaking about Jesus, constantly directs the attention of her children also to Mary and Joseph, is a further proof that the Catholic Church is indeed the Church of Christ. For in the Gospel story it is just in this way that

Jesus is presented to us—in the company of Mary, His Mother, and of St. Joseph, His foster-father.

Family life is the foundation of organized society. The civil State is built up not of individuals, but of families. Now the family exists for the sake of the child. The child is the central figure—the explanation of family life.

And so God presents to the world His own family to be the world's model. He will come to us not austere, not in awful separation from His fellows, but sweetly and comfortingly as a member of a human family. And of this truth the Catholic Church keeps ever reminding her children. And your own heart tells you that in acting thus the Catholic Church is right.

Broken Reeds

WILFRID O'NEILL

Selection from an address on modern evils and their causes

LAW without religion is a broken reed. Law and government, in a democratic State at least, are based on the assumption that the great majority will do right voluntarily, from motives of natural religion or Divine sanction. Purely natural religion or ethics may induce many to do right, but in the case of the great majority, under temptation and especially when the risk of detection seems slight or absent, only ideas of justice and duty founded on a supernatural belief in inescapable personal responsibility to a Supreme Being and on ideas of charity based on love of God will lead men to do right, laborers and artisans to do honest days' work, employers to be fair to employes, lawyers to be faithful to clients, guardians to wards, trustees to trusts, public officials to their offices, husbands and wives to each other.

In business matters, the effect of ignoring religious principles and restraints and inescapable personal responsibility to God has been to give free rein to mere cunning and cleverness. Such a system ultimately puts the bulk of means of production and wealth in the hands of the very clever and cunning few. But this, as has been said of all vice, we first endure, then pity, then embrace. So all classes have participated in the wrong-doing, overlooking

the fact that however much they might grab and cheat, an unfair share of worldly wealth would gradually get into the hands of the cleverest few. So it is that workingmen have adopted the very methods of un-Christian industrialism and have played into its hands by making a commodity of labor, one class trying to make it cheap, the other dear, both ignoring the dictates of charity and justice. Many workingmen ignore the fact that when they unreasonably limit production, they are, in the long run, cheating each other, because the increased cost of goods due to slacking finally comes out of their pockets. They also ignore the fact that in a system in which the prize goes to unrestrained cleverness, the great masses cannot win. . . .

If you carefully examine modern political and economic teaching you will find that it depends for its efficacy on force, human respect and the promise of material gain, with a little sentimentalism thrown in. Any such plan is doomed to failure. High ideals are what inspire men to do good. Laws do not create ideals; rather, ideals create laws. When people depend upon mere human laws to make men happy, they ignore at least two things: first, that you cannot make men just or wise or industrious by law; and second, that justice alone without charity will not prevent hardships and sufferings and poverty. You cannot make people charitable by law. Of course, there will always be suffering and misfortune in the world. Not even charity can entirely eliminate it, but it can go a long way towards alleviating it. While it is often difficult even for a good man to know what exact justice requires of him, in his own heart and conscience the dictates of charity will generally make him know what he ought to do. But assuming that justice alone were sufficient—which it is not—there must be a way of enforcing it. Law is not self-executing and the civil and criminal law will not enforce justice unless it is supported by a public guided by sound principles of morality.

Human respect or respect for public opinion is another broken reed. In the first place the standards of public opinion are being lowered by countless influences around us, so that it tolerates what it ought not to tolerate. It has always been easy to fool public opinion. Today, with our low standards, public opinion is not only being fooled; it is being openly defied.

The expressions, "living one's own life" and "self-expression," of which we hear much lately, are being made a cover for a form of anarchy which ignores even public opinion. And that is quite natural. Once Divine law has been discarded, it is natural that many individuals will question the right of other individuals to make any code of morals for them. The end is anarchy.

In a world which has largely abandoned any lively faith in a Divine law and the force of conscience, and would let everyone be his own God and set up his own standard of morality, to suit and justify his own appetites, many people have adopted the policy of doing anything they desire when they think they can "get away with it," when they think it will not be discovered by men and punished by man's law. It is easy to fool the public, to be respected by many without being truly respectable. It is easy to violate many laws, to acquire wealth dishonestly and escape punishment. Thus men have gradually come to have a contempt both for public opinion and for laws and their penalties. Yet, by a strange contradiction, they still blindly think that they can enforce law against others and thereby remedy all our ills. Having put their faith in materialistic remedies, many in our own country have sought by more and more drastic measures to prevent injustice by passing laws designed to regulate almost every human activity, even our appetites. They have seen and will see their efforts fail. We have piled up a mass of statutes, rules, regulations and commissions that is bewildering to the best of lawyers and puts an unjust burden on legitimate business. We have become a nation of law-makers and law-breakers, until many well-meaning but misguided people, seeing the wrongs and sufferings that exist even in the midst of wealth and plenty and elaborate government, have become desperate. Blind to the fact that mere things like government and wealth have no morality, and that morality and conscience are what make men use these things rightly and deter them from using them wrongly, they have made the mistake of condemning, not the abuse of God's gifts, but the gifts themselves. . . .

Sounding in our modern political teaching is a note of despair. And what are its fruits? The world is full of scandal, of exposés of rottenness, corruption and graft, and of probes, investigations and vain prosecutions, often re-

sulting in more scandal than that which they have striven to probe or prosecute. No wonder people are losing faith in probes and investigations! This despair is extending even to religion, and the claim has been repeatedly made in recent times, especially during the World War, that religion, specifically Christianity, has failed. I answer in the words of Mr. Chesterton that it has not failed, for it has not been fairly tried. I am not unmindful of the fact that many well-meaning people have felt disgust with the conduct of some who professed religion. Of such scandal-givers it has well been said that it were better that millstones had been fastened around their necks and that they had been cast into the sea. But, after all, Christ established His religion for sinners, and one is unreasonable who expects that even the true religion will of itself immediately make every one of its members a saint.

Such a man falls into the same error of condemning an institution because of the neglect or abuse of it. If Christianity helps us in any degree to live better lives, it justifies itself and, if we do not get the most out of it, an honest examination of our own hearts will tell us that it is our own fault, and not the fault of Christianity.

Christianity may not hasten the millenium, but it will prevent the world from becoming a pandemonium. Let the spirit of materialism run riot, let men depend on human motives only, and nothing will prevent the rest of this world becoming like Russia, where it seems as if the real pandemonium exists, as if all the demons of Hell have broken loose, and with their seven deadly sins stalked through those unhappy and desolate lands.

Is there a remedy? Yes, . . . there is a remedy and it is not only theoretically sound, but so practical that we keep on implicitly recognizing it even when we have ceased to respect it.

That remedy is faith in Divine laws of reward and punishment which will give a compelling force to conscience, and enforce respect for the sanctity of the oath. The remedy is suggested in our scheme of government and in many of our private contracts. It is implicit in every oath. The oath enters into the provisions for determining the qualifications of electors, for admission to citizenship, for entry into public office. It is the basis of all of our court procedure, and it enters into almost every matter in which

rights are asserted and defended. Now the oath assumes a recognition of God as a Supreme Being to whom we must answer for our conduct. This involves a recognition of the truths He has revealed, and none more than the Divine virtues of faith, hope and charity. We must return to a lively faith in the principles which give sanctity to the oath. And in our private dealings we must be able to believe that the great majority of men in high places will be above corruption and bribery, even when there is no risk of detection. To be secure in this belief the world must return to the religion of Christ. If we are to avoid confusion and disorder, we must forget our silly pride and recognize the principle of authority. We recognize the wisdom and necessity of a Supreme Court to interpret our laws. We must recognize the wisdom and necessity of a supreme teaching authority in the living Church to interpret the word of God. Or is God less wise than we? Do we think He did not mean what He said when He promised us this authority? . . .

I have tried to sketch what not only my religious training but my business and professional experience have convinced me are the causes of the evils that beset us, and the remedy. Those of us who have such beliefs must do our part in applying the remedy. We need apostolic zeal among the laity as well as the clergy, and less of the shrinking, apologetic attitude.

If we deny our faith and are silent in the face of wrongdoing to gain wealth or curry social favor, we are cowards. The world must stop leaning on broken reeds. Day in and day out, by works as well as by words, we must preach the doctrine of God and His Church, that man does not live by bread alone and that it availeth a man nothing to gain the wealth of the world if he loses his immortal soul. For the distinguishing fact about man is that he is a spiritual being. The man who seeks to gain wealth and pleasure by wrongdoing may gain all the wealth of the world and all of its physical pleasures, but he will lose its sweetness, which comes only from carrying the burden of Him who said "My yoke is sweet and my burden light."